

Commercial and Industrial Buildings,

Iowa Iron Works Blacksmith Shop
Ninth and Washington Streets
Dubuque
Dubuque County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-160-AR

HABS
IOWA,
31-DUBU,
13-AR-

**PHOTOGRAPHS
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

Historic American Buildings Survey
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
P.O. Box 25287
Denver Colorado 80225

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Site Location: Ninth and Washington Streets
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 8.26
Cadastral grid : SE1/4 SE1/4 S24 T89N R2E
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'
Lot description: Subdivision of City Lot 506A, Lot 2;
Subdivision of Lot 2 of City Lot 506;
Subdivision of Lot 2 of City Lot 506B;
Subdivision 2-2 of Lot 1 of City Lot
506.

Present Owner: Iowa Department of Transportation
Present Usage: warehouse
Present Condition : fair

Overall Dimensions: 55'x 80'; two stories
Orientation : south
Architectural Description : Plan type : 2-story rectangular, open-space factory.
Foundation: (below grade)
Structure : wood frame with masonry bearing walls.
Ext. walls: common red brick laid in common bond.
Roof : flat composition roof with brick parapet walls.
Chimneys : two corbeled brick exterior chimneys on the
west wall; one interior smokestack with brick
octagonal shaft topped by square brick exten-
sion.
Windows : painted wood 2/2 double-hung windows with loose
lintels or brick segmental arch heads.
Openings : sectional garage door opening cut into original
block's south wall.
Details : modestly corbeled brick cornices; steel shed
addition on west wall (1976); utility bridge
from building across Ninth Street attached to
south wall.

Construction Date : 1851; c.1920

Architecture Style: 19th Century Functional

Physical History : Born October 15, 1824 in Penfield, New York, Hammond Rouse moved to Dubuque in spring, 1851. That year he founded Farley, Rouse and Company, an iron foundry, with early Dubuque capitalist Jesse P. Farley. In 1857-58, the firm was reorganized as Rouse and Williams, and then in the early 1860s as Rouse and Dean, as Hammond Rouse took on other partners. The company soon became known alternately as the Iowa Iron Works. The firm produced engines, boilers, steam fittings, heavy steamboat castings, mill equipment and

architectural cast iron columns and storefronts from a plant located on the corner of Ninth and Washington streets. Evidence suggests that the existing brick blacksmith shop was part of the original complex, built as a single-story building when the company was founded. Fronting Ninth Street, it featured a three-bay facade and single end gable with a central cupola. During the 1880s the company became an important producer of iron-hulled riverboats. The Iowa Iron Company produced the *Clyde*, a 96' tug, reportedly the first steamboat manufactured on the upper Mississippi River. By 1890 the company had launched 22 iron- and steel-hulled boats; by the turn of the century this number had jumped to a hundred.

As business expanded, so did the factory. In announcing the construction of a large, two-story building for the company in 1867, the *Dubuque Daily Herald* reported: "This immense building, only a small portion, however, of the establishment known as the 'Iowa Iron Works,' is but the commencement, or wing, to a new building with which they propose to cover the entire block." Construction continued throughout the 1870s; by 1884 the complex was complete.

"From small beginnings, troublesome times, financial panics, and indifferent success generally," an 1880 history stated, "the establishment has continued to grow and is now regarded as among the most prominent and valuable of Dubuque's materials interests." By 1880 the factory employed 60 men, with aggregate annual sales of \$75,000, and was called "the oldest in the [ironworking] business on the river north of St. Louis." That year Rouse retired, and Rouse, Dean and Company was dissolved. Dean and Hopkins took on another partner, J. McMurchy, and the firm was reorganized as Dean, Hopkins and McMurchy. The following year, the company was incorporated with initial capitalization of \$150,000.

The *Dubuque Herald* described the plant at its heyday in 1895: "Their present enlarged and splendidly equipped plant occupies the entire block bounded by Ninth and Tenth and Washington and Elm streets. The main building, a substantial brick structure, is two and three stories in height, and has a frontage of 250 feet on Washington street and 230 feet on Ninth street. All of the other buildings of this model plant are alike in proportion, and every convenience and facility is at hand. An inspection of the works reveals the fact that this firm have perfected appliances and machinery, that are duplicated only by the very largest establishments of the kind in this country. Here are large machine shops, equipped with the latest improved machinery; a foundry, equipped with four large cupolas with a capacity of thirty tons at one heat; a brass foundry, that has produced a casting weighing one ton; immense boiler and blacksmith shops, a large moulding loft for ship building, pattern shops, containing thousands of different patterns, a copper room, the draughting and designing rooms, where a force of twelve draughtsmen and engineers are constantly engaged. The motive power of the plant is furnished by a battery of seven engines and boilers. This company has its own electric light plant, consisting of ten arc and 160 incandescent lights, run by separate dynamos and engines."

The Iowa Iron Works continued business throughout the remainder of the century under a succession of directors. The firm ceased operations at its Washington Street plant in 1903, and the factory was sold to the Klauer Manufacturing Company. (The Iowa Iron Works continued its boat building operation at the Ice Harbor until it, too, was sold in 1906 to the Dubuque Boat and Boiler Company.) Manufacturer of sheet metal architectural components, Klauer occupied the complex, building an extension to the factory [HABS No. IA-160-AS] across Ninth Street from the blacksmith shop. Sometime between 1911 and 1936, Klauer added a second story to the blacksmith shop, changing the roof line from an end gable to a flat roof with brick parapets. The remainder of the Iowa Iron Works complex has subsequently been razed by Klauer. Only the blacksmith shop remains, highly altered and connected with the 1912 annex by an overhead utility bridge over Ninth Street.

Significance: The Iowa Iron Works Blacksmith Shop is significant as one of the earliest structures - and the only remaining component - from what was once the extensive complex of one of Dubuque's most important early industrial firms. Its subsequent alteration has diminished its interpretive value, however.

References: Dubuque City Directories: 1857 - 1970.
Sanborn Insurance Maps: 1884, 1891, 1909, 1972.
Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory: 1882-1923.
Dubuque County Assessment Record: 4-6-10-1 and 4-6-10-2.
Iowa Department of Transportation, "Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Cultural Resources Assessment."
The Industries of Dubuque: Her Relations as a Trade Center, Business Houses and Manufacturing Establishments (Dubuque: J.M. Elstner and Co., 1887), page 62.
Franklin T. Oldt and P.J. Quigley, *History of Dubuque County, Iowa* (Chicago: Goodspeed Historical Association, 1911), pages 97, 144.
Dubuque: Its Manufacturing and Commercial Facilities, Together with Its Railroads, Public Buildings, Business Growth and Future Prospects (Dubuque: The Times Company, 1886), page 62.
C.C. Childs, *The History of Dubuque County, Iowa* (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1880), pages 654, 781, 870.
Dubuque Daily Herald: 5 September 1867; 31 October 1875; 2 December 1876; 14 December 1877; 3 January 1879; 1 January 1895.

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